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Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, our Father, give us the grace and power to choose the more challenging right. Keep us from being too easily deflected from laudable goals. Deliver us from the procrastinations that cause us to miss opportunities. Strengthen us to finish what we start as You give us wisdom to clearly know the path we should travel. Save us from the folly that is deaf to conscience and the arrogance which will not accept advice. Open our hearts to the entry of Your spirit so that we may experience abundant living.

Use our lawmakers today for Your glory. Once again, Lord, we thank You for the life and legacy of Rosa Parks.

We pray in Your powerful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The PRESIDENT pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be a period for the transaction of morning business until 4 p.m., with the time equally divided.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The acting majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, we will open the session with a period of morning business until 4 p.m. At 4 today the Senate will begin consideration of the 2005 deficit reduction bill. Under the order entered into last Friday, the time from 4 to 5 today will be under the control of the chairman of the Budget Committee, Senator GREGG.

As a reminder, the majority leader has announced that there will be no rollcall votes during today's session. We will remain on the deficit reduction bill for the remainder of this week. The agreement allows a specific division of debate time over the next few days with the statutory time limit to expire at 6 p.m. on Wednesday.

It will be a busy week with rollcall votes occurring until we complete action on the deficit reduction measure. We will alert Members later as to when the first votes can be expected.

I would also suggest to Senators that we may also consider any conference reports that may become available, including the Agriculture appropriations conference report.

SUPREME COURT NOMINATION OF JUDGE SAMUEL ALITO, JR.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this morning the President of the United States nominated Judge Samuel Alito of the Third Circuit Court of Appeals to be the next Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. We are beginning to learn that Judge Alito has an extremely impressive career. He is an alumnus of Princeton, where he was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. He graduated from Yale Law School where he was editor of the Yale Law Journal, and he clerked for Judge Leonard

Garth on the same court where Judge Alito now sits.

Judge Alito has devoted his professional life to serving our country. He served in the U.S. Army Reserves. He served as an assistant U.S. attorney in the appellate division and as a U.S. Attorney for the District of New Jersey. He served as an assistant to the Solicitor General where he argued 12 cases before the Supreme Court. For the last 15 years he served as a Federal appellate judge on the Third Circuit Court of Appeals.

As the President noted this morning, Judge Alito has in fact more judicial experience than any Supreme Court nominee in the last 70 years. Over the course of his outstanding career, Judge Alito has consistently been praised for his legal acumen. In fact, one attorney who appeared before him said that "to describe Judge Alito as outstanding is to use understatement. He's the best judge on the circuit, maybe the country."

Judge Alito has also been praised for his calm, courteous, and thoughtful demeanor. I had a chance to experience that this morning myself when I met with him.

Lawyers who have appeared before him describe him as measured and judicious. They have said he "has a fine, nice demeanor . . . He couldn't have a keener demeanor" was one observation. Another said, "He is never discourteous or abusive." Another said, "He is forthright and fair." Another said he "reaches honest decisions."

With his outstanding abilities, it is no wonder the American Bar Association gave Judge Alito its highest rating of unanimously well qualified, which means everybody on the committee found him well qualified. That is the highest ranking the ABA can give.

In supporting his confirmation to the Third Circuit, our former colleague Senator Bill Bradley said of Judge Alito that as U.S. Attorney "he had a

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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